

A STUDY OF THE DROPOUTS AND THE HOLDING POWER
OF STUDENTS IN URBANDALE HIGH SCHOOL
FOR YEARS 1963-1968

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by
Harold W. Degner

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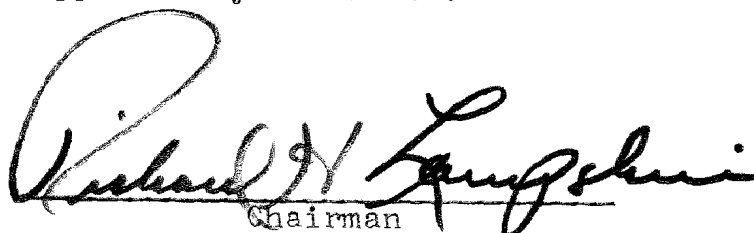
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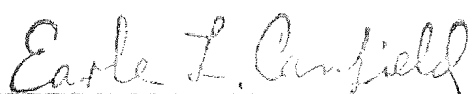

Dean of the School of Graduate Studies

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The dropout is not a new or rare problem. Students in the 1930's, 40's, and 50's quit school before receiving a diploma. It was not as great a problem then, whereas today it is viewed as a major educational problem. The reason it is a major educational problem today is because of the many factors associated with the dropout. The population explosion of the 1940's means that today the number of youths now ready to enter the labor market is unprecedented in history. This was not a problem several years ago when anyone who wanted to work could find employment.

It is not the single dropout who causes the frightening situation today but the sheer number of dropouts and the facts of economic life, coupled with great technological advances, which have made the dropout a major educational problem.

School policies and curricula must be studied, reviewed, and changed to increase the school's holding power on its students. The reasons why students drop out of school must be found and adjustments made to remedy this major educational problem.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. The purpose of this study is to determine whether the new curriculum innovations in operation at Urbandale High School, Urbandale, Iowa, have increased the holding power of students, thus reducing the dropout rate.

Importance of the problem. The school dropout problem has grown to such magnitude that two presidents of the United States found it necessary to focus public attention on it. In 1963, President John F. Kennedy referred to it as a "serious national problem," and in 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson said, "Almost a million young people each year will continue to quit school--if our schools fail to stimulate their desire to learn."¹

Many problems are associated with the dropout. First of all, his employment opportunities are greatly limited; secondly, it is difficult for the dropout to achieve a sense of individual worth; and thirdly, our public schools have failed in their purpose, to educate all students, at least through high school.² Hence, school dropouts imply failure

¹Daniel Schreiber, Dropout Studies, Design and Conduct (Washington: National Education Association of United States, 1965), p. 7.

²Bert I. Greene, Preventing Student Dropouts (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1966), p. 5.

on the school's part, particularly when a large percentage of dropouts clearly have the mental ability to succeed.

Many people look at the problem of dropouts as mainly an educational one. This is far from the truth. Dropouts also create economic, legal, social, and political problems.

Never before in history have so many agencies been so concerned about the dropout. This concern is steadily mounting and has attracted the attention of many individual people, as well as groups and agencies which are not directly associated with education.

Why the great concern today? Because many of the factors formerly caused little concern whereas today there is a greatly increased concern of the many problems associated with the dropout.

The dropout is a major problem in our society today for these reasons:¹

1. Although the proportion of dropouts is decreasing, a greater number of young people are leaving school in the 1960's.
2. The present and developing economy of the United States requires a greater degree of skill than was previously required of the labor force.
3. The age at which a person enters the labor force is

¹Ibid., p. 2.

rising.

4. Too great an experience of frustration and failure deprives the student of the incentive to succeed.
5. A dropout may become eligible for social welfare programs throughout his life.
6. There are few places in society for the dropout.
7. The dropout represents a major educational and social failure.

Although the percentage of young people in the United States who stay in school long enough to receive a high school diploma has steadily increased in the past few years, the United States is still losing 30 per cent of its youth.¹

Since the high school diploma today represents the minimum level of achievement acceptable for employment in the United States industrial society, the lack of a diploma represents a severe handicap in the society of the 1960's.² The more than a million young people who leave school each year without a high school diploma find entrance into the labor market one of the most difficult tasks to accomplish.

There is no place for these youths in society. They

¹Kenneth A. Simon and W. Vance Grant, Digest of Educational Statistics, Office of Education Bulletin 1964, No. 18 (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1964), p. 3.

²Ibid.

are the "tween agers," between childhood and adulthood, between school and employment.

Purpose of the study. The purpose of this study is to determine whether the new curriculum innovations in Urbandale High School have reduced the dropout rate. Increasing the holding power a school has on its students is of great concern to administrators, curriculum directors, society, and most of all, to the students.

Methods of motivating students must be found while providing for their educational needs and keeping them interested in school. Reducing the number of dropouts from school will benefit total society.

Limitation of the study. Two of the limitations on this study of dropouts are: (1) time limitation, in that the new curriculum innovations have been in effect only two years at Urbandale High School being introduced in 1967; and (2) participant limitation, in that it was conducted in only one high school (Urbandale High School) and therefore only those students who dropped out of this high school before graduation between the years 1963-1968 are a part of this study.

This study, therefore, should not be looked upon as a representation of more than just this one high school.

II. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Dropout. Dropout means any student who leaves high school without graduating. It does not include students who transfer to another school, students who are hospitalized during the school year, or students who die. It does include students who voluntarily leave school before receiving a high school diploma, and students who are excluded from school by the principal or school board.

Holding power. The holding power of a school is the ability of the school to retain its students until they have completed three years of high school and receive a diploma.

Tenth grade student. Any student who has earned a minimum of eight semester credits but less than sixteen semester credits is considered a tenth grade student.

Eleventh grade student. Any student who has earned a minimum of sixteen semester credits but less than twenty-four semester credits is called an eleventh grade student.

Twelfth grade student. Any student who has earned a minimum of twenty-four semester credits but less than thirty-two semester credits is referred to as a twelfth grade student.

III. THE PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY

The procedure for determining whether the number of dropouts in Urbandale High School has been reduced since new curriculum innovations have been in effect was as follows: (1) sending a questionnaire to all the dropouts between the years 1963-1968 and getting their reaction to the new innovations; and (2) making a comparison to determine whether the percentage of dropouts each year had changed since the new innovations have been in operation.

The questionnaire used was validated by sending it to a random sampling of senior high school students at Urbandale High School to find out whether the questions were clear and easy to understand.

After validating the questionnaire it was sent to thirty-eight students who were dropouts from Urbandale High School between the years 1963-1968.

The data secured from the questionnaire¹ is presented in Chapter III. Tables are used to reveal how the innovations have affected the number of dropouts, why students drop out, whether they pursue further education, the type of employment later secured, and other pertinent information.

Chapter IV includes the conclusions, summary, and

¹See Appendix

recommendations as to how schools can reduce the number of students who drop out before completing their high school education.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Chapter II is concerned with a review of the literature relating to the dropout problem and is divided into these parts: (1) the seriousness of the dropout problem; (2) the reasons for student dropouts; (3) recurring characteristics among dropouts; (4) the dropout as a social problem; and (5) ways to increase the school's holding power on its students.

I. SERIOUSNESS OF THE DROPOUT PROBLEM

It has been predicted that 7.5 million high school dropouts will occur during the 1960-1970 period.¹ It must be recognized that the current common approaches to increase the school's holding power have been less than adequate.

The present national high school dropout rate is about 35 per cent.² In 1949, it was more than 50 per cent; and in 1950, for the first time in this country, more

¹T. J. Bond, "The High School Dropout Problem," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, XXXVI, No. 275 (September, 1962), 182.

²Daniel Schreiber (ed.), Guidance and the School Dropout (Washington: National Education Association of the United States and American Personnel and Guidance Association, 1964), p. 2.

students graduated from high school than dropped out.¹

The phenomenon of the school dropout is not new, but the problem of the school dropout is. The important thing is that it is impossible today not to see the dropout problem as the keystone of a conglomeration of problems which threaten to overwhelm the stability of American existence. Some features of this conglomeration include the exploding population, automation, and migration, particularly from rural to urban areas. The future faced by the dropout, the vocationally incompetent, is a future of social failure and economic suicide.

The national unemployment rate has not fallen below 5 per cent for several years.² For the dropouts the rate rises to 24 per cent and it is likely to be as high as 70 per cent in depressed slum neighborhoods in the nation's great cities.³ These youngsters are unemployed because the kind of work they can do is vanishing from our culture.

II. WHY STUDENTS BECOME DROPOUTS

Almost one million lost, bewildered, defeated, hope-

¹Ibid., p. 6.

²Daniel Schreiber, "Helping the Potential Dropout," The PTA Magazine, LVIII (November, 1963), 4.

³Ibid.

less young men and women will leave our nation's schools this year before graduating from them. According to the current literature the dropout problem is a consequence of education's failure to meet its obligations. Daniel Schreiber, director of the NEA Project on School Dropouts, gives these major reasons why students drop out of school.¹

1. Reading retardation. The greatest single factor causing dropouts is inability to read. The average dropout is retarded two or more years in reading. This affects not only the child's attitude, but also the parent's attitude toward school. All parents, regardless of their cultural or economic level, or how unschooled they are, know that there is one subject the school is supposed to teach their children, and that is: how to read. Dr. Ruth C. Penly found that three times as many poor readers as good readers drop out of school. This is obvious, if we think it through, because pupils who do not read well enough to do the work of their grade satisfactorily are apt to fail and be retained.

2. Low intelligence. Most studies on dropouts show that

¹Daniel Schreiber, "The School Dropout--Fugitive From Failure," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, XXXXVI (May, 1962), 233-241.

the mean intelligence quotient of dropouts is lower than that of school stay-ins.¹ Yet a seven-city study showed that 6 per cent of the dropouts had IQ's over 110.² By subtracting 1 or 2 per cent to eliminate the emotionally disturbed child from the total, surely there are enough children left who have ability not only to graduate from high school, but to graduate from college.

3. School location - size. The location of a school seems to play a part in school dropout rates. Urban and rural areas have the highest rate while suburbia comes off best.³ This leads one to believe there is a relationship with the economic level of the family.
4. Family attitudes, economic level, and occupation of parents. A family's attitude toward school and education in general, plus the motivation a child receives at home, play an important part in whether or not he graduates from high school. In a study done by Dr. A. L. Bertrand two-thirds of the parents of dropouts had a negative or indifferent attitude toward school.⁴ They felt that the lack

¹Ibid., 238.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

of a high school education would not be a deterrent in earning a living. At the same time, almost 100 per cent of the parents of the school stay-ins believe that a young person would be seriously handicapped if he did not possess a high school education.¹ If parental attitude and involvement in the life of the school is important, it means that school administrators must devise new methods and approaches to involve such parents.

5. Curriculum. The average curriculum for the college-bound student seems to be good. Students do graduate from high school and do go on to successful completion of their college work. This group represents roughly one-third of our student population.² The next group, those students who graduate from business, vocational, or technical schools, do find jobs and do become decent, worthwhile, self-supporting citizens.³ It is the last one-third, the dropout, that seems to contain the misfits. The ordinary curriculum does not hold their interest or satisfy their needs. What a boy or girl of thirteen or fourteen who is a potential dropout needs is a curriculum that holds

¹Ibid., 239.

²Ibid., 240.

³Ibid.

his interest and meets his needs.¹

6. Guidance. A study by Miss Lucille Browne showed that more than 50 per cent of the dropouts who were interviewed a year after leaving school said they would have been helped if they had had guidance.² The schools must increase their guidance services, not only in the secondary schools, but also in the elementary schools. The potential dropouts, the potential poor readers, the potential delinquents must be discovered while they are in grades two or three and the school must do something to help them--a preventive program, in other words. To wait until they are sixteen, and then try to set them on the right employment paths is not realistic. Their symptoms must be attacked when they are first uncovered. These symptoms of the potential dropout must be prevented from occurring, and for this to happen the schools need good guidance counselors.

Other causes of dropouts listed by Schreiber are: grade retention, subject failure, self image, dislike of school, and lack of interest in school.³

Psychological factors and the dropouts. The reasons

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

a child drops out of school are usually multiple and complex. Most parents of dropouts seldom take an active interest in what their children are doing in school. Few parents of dropouts strongly oppose their children dropping out of school even when the effects of social status were controlled. The importance of parental interest and involvement cannot be too strongly emphasized as a factor in school leaving.

Gordon P. Liddle cites many psychological factors which are reasons why students drop out of school.¹ According to Liddle, dropouts as a group have below average social and personal adjustment which contributes to their decision to leave school. Many have a sense of rejection, isolation, and defeat which leads to a lack of acceptance of and respect for others.

Liddle also states that when a lower class, low IQ child stays in school, it is almost always because he is finding some social and academic satisfactions for at least part of his school day; otherwise, he almost always leaves.² Students achieving in athletics or music usually graduate no matter what their ability levels. The student who develops

¹Gordon P. Liddle, "Psychological Factors and the Dropout," The High School Journal, XLV (April, 1962), 276.

²Ibid.

a specialized talent seems able to extend his pattern of achieving in one area into other areas as well.

The immediate cause of school leaving may be a failed examination or a disagreement with a teacher, but the basic causes are usually multiple and of long standing.

The Maryland State study of dropouts. A study conducted by the Maryland State Department of Education for the year 1960-1961 revealed many interesting characteristics of school dropouts.¹ The study produced no evidence to support the idea that most dropouts are delinquent children. A large majority, 79 per cent, were not considered serious behavior problems by either their counselors or their principals. Nor are dropouts necessarily homeless or the products of broken homes. Eighty per cent of those studied lived with one parent, and 70 per cent lived with both. Lack of intelligence may be a big factor for some dropouts, but it certainly is not the dominant cause. The Maryland study showed that 49.8 per cent of the dropouts had average to above average intelligence.² It is also interesting to note that 45.3 per cent of the dropouts had not been retained in either elementary or junior high school. It

¹Percy V. Williams, "School Dropouts," National Education Journal, XXXXXII (February, 1963), 11.

²Ibid.

appears from the data mentioned thus far most dropouts are normal youths leading normal lives.

The study also revealed some data on parents of dropouts. It was found that the occupation of the head of the household in 46.4 per cent of the dropout cases was classified as unskilled.¹ It also revealed that 78.5 per cent of the mothers and 80.3 per cent of the fathers had been dropouts.

The study also found that more than two-thirds of the dropouts never participated in athletics or extra-curricular activities of any kind.

A major portion of the study was concentrated on the academic side. It was found that of the four programs offered, 45.8 per cent of the dropouts were in the general course; in the commercial course, 19.2 per cent; in the vocational course, 12.9 per cent; in the academic course, 11.2 per cent; and other, 10.9 per cent.²

The study also revealed that 45.5 per cent of the dropouts were reading at sixth grade level or below.

As far as course failures were concerned, 47.5 per cent were failing three or more subjects during the semester they left school.³ This could largely be attributed to the fact that many dropouts go through a period marking time

¹Ibid., 12.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

while waiting their final day of school.

The dropout student in the Maryland study gave the following causes for dropping out of school. Lack of interest in school accounted for 35.3 per cent of dropouts; lack of success in school, 17.8 per cent; and economic reasons other than the cost of going to school, 10 per cent.¹ Marriage and pregnancy represented 14.5 per cent. Together these four reasons were given by 77.6 per cent of the dropouts. The lack of interest and lack of success as reasons for dropping out of school are very significant.

Obviously, the lack of participation in meaningful activities and low educational and aspirational level of the parents provides significant clues in identifying the potential dropout in school.

Dropouts who cited lack of success as the reason for leaving school reveal a feeling of being left out. Having a feeling of belonging, a feeling of being wanted and respected as a person is a universal need, and the fact that so many dropouts show little interest in school activities may be a sign that the programs in the school are not meeting this need.

Evidence from this study indicates that the full burden of blame for the dropout problem cannot be borne by

¹Ibid.

the high school. Activities and provisions to assure success in high school must begin in the home, in the elementary school, and in the community. Usually it is too late to apply corrective measures when the student informs the high school principal or counselor that he is quitting school or when the first symptom of a desire to leave becomes evident.

III. RECURRING CHARACTERISTICS AMONG DROPOUTS

The present retention rate of pupils in the public schools of the United States is approximately 60 per cent.¹ In a democracy the education of an individual is conceived as a duty, and not as a privilege, for the chief goal of the school is the effective and continuous optimum development of all individuals. The real strength of a democracy derives largely from the notion that individuals are different, and that society must both recognize and accept such differences.

Cassel and Coleman have listed these characteristics as recurring among dropouts.²

¹Russell N. Cassel and Jack C. Coleman, "A Critical Examination of the School Dropout, Reluctant Learner, and Older Non-College Student Problem," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, XXXVI, 277 (November, 1962), 60.

²Ibid., 61.

1. Scholastic

Failure of one or more school year (usually first, second, eighth, or ninth).

A year or more behind in reading or arithmetic at seventh grade level.

Poor school attendance and numerous truancies.

Little or no participation in extracurricular school activities.

Attendance at numerous elementary schools.

School marks predominantly below "C".

Little interest in school or learning shown.

Strong resentment towards school control evidenced.

2. Social

Very few friends and associates, and is not well liked by peers.

Poor general and personal adjustments.

Distrustful and resentful towards adults.

Has a feeling of "not belonging."

Girls tend to go steady with older boys.

Boys tend to own a car.

Often in difficulty with community agencies and the law.

3. Personal

Usually purposeless with no personal goals for achievement.

Low scholastic aptitude (IQ's above 109, 6 per cent; below 90, 46 per cent).

Sixteen years of age or older (35 per cent at sixteen years of age; 27 per cent at seventeen).

Physically is either quite small or quite large for age group.

Frequently ill and usually fatigued.

4. Family

Usually from weak or broken home.

From low income group, and usually from trade or labor occupations.

Education of parents usually below eighth grade level.

Often five or more children in the family.

Attitude of parents toward graduation negative or vacillating.

These reasons were given by pupils or their parents for terminating school attendance:¹

1. No interest in school.
2. Prefer work to school.
3. Need to help support home financially.
4. Wants to get married, or girl has become pregnant.
5. Wants to enlist in military service.

¹Ibid., 61-62.

Clearly from an inspection of the recurring characteristics of the dropout the causes are multiple in nature and that no single remedy will correct the situation for all individuals.

Recent surveys show that there are slightly more male than female dropouts; about 53 per cent are boys.¹ The great majority, about 45 per cent, quit school at age sixteen.

The dropout problem is an educational one--to help youth achieve meaningful success in their environment and to become intelligent, productive, participating adults.

IV. THE DROPOUT BECOMES A SOCIAL PROBLEM

The failure of a dropout represents a failure of the American people. The primary function of the high school is no longer that of a college preparatory institution. More provision must be made to take care of those students whose completion of high school terminates their formal education. When this is done, the curriculum will become more attractive to the potential dropout.

Compulsory school attendance laws have little, if any, effect on the number of high school dropouts. They merely postpone the time.

¹Schreiber, loc. cit.

According to T. J. Bond, two goals of the American high school are: (1) to prepare boys and girls for effective participation in the civic and economic life of the country, and (2) to provide the best possible chance in life for each youngster.¹ Dropouts are unprepared for adult responsibility. People who do not possess a high school diploma may have a sense of inferiority, further complicated by job rejection. Such maladjustments may result in anti-social behavior. Any person with less education than he could have profited by, or from, represents a serious waste of human resources to the nation as well as to himself. Future results of this waste will be compounded when the dropout, as a member of society, will be asked to help shoulder the financial burden of our nation. Can we expect constructive attitudes toward education from those who found it inadequate, whose needs it failed to meet, and who dropped out convinced that the school was wasting their time? Within this disillusioned group lies the ferment which could become receptive to other ideologies. As President Kennedy said in a State of the Union message, "A child miseducated is a child lost."

What happens to the high school dropouts. According

¹Bond, loc. cit.

to Robert R. Ritchie, principal of a high school in Ohio, a dropout becomes a very likely social problem.¹ The high school dropout is making a significant contribution to our national rising crime rate, he adds to the unemployment pool of his community, and he produces a negative effect on the student currently enrolled who is looking for an excuse to drop out of school. Regardless of the geographic location of the dropout, these are his contributions to society.²

The degree of his influence is directly proportionate to the number of dropouts in any given community. A recent editorial, Ralph McGill put it this way: "The school dropout has been described as perhaps the greatest challenge and American tragedy of our time."

V. INCREASING THE SCHOOL'S HOLDING POWER ON ITS STUDENTS

According to the current literature the dropout problem is a consequence of education's failure to meet its obligations. Educators must discover why they are not holding more students through graduation and what can be

¹Robert R. Ritchie, "The High School Dropout--An Educational Dilemma," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, XXXVI, No. 277 (November, 1962), 46.

²Ibid.

done about it. Early recognition of the potential dropout is of prime importance. The inability to read adequately in early grades is greatly magnified in high school and leads to a feeling of defeat and frustration, the first step in a decision to quit school. The average dropout is sixteen years old.¹ He is most likely to quit between the ninth and tenth or tenth and eleventh grades. It is especially likely he will not return after a summer vacation. As a rule, he has shunned extracurricular activities and failed to become a part of a social group within the school. Usually, his relationships with his teachers and many fellow students indicate tension, suspicion, and strain. His poor attendance record, lack of interest, and failure to cooperate have contributed to his being retarded about two years.² His parents are unimpressed with the value of education. Most students who quit school before the eleventh grade have reasons connected with the school itself or with their inability to perform the work.

Schools have no control over some factors, chiefly, that of the socio-economic status and cultural background of the student. Another factor outside the influence of the school is that of marriage and pregnancy. The greater the

¹Bond, op. cit., 183.

²Ibid.

number of factors working to a student's disadvantage, the greater is the chance of his dropping out of school.

To keep youth in school, attention must be focused on a meaningful curriculum, enlightened guidance efforts, and a program of financial aid.¹ All students do not want the same things from school. Each one should be provided the type of training and education best suited to him as an individual and to his expected needs as an adult.

Guidance programs should early identify the potential dropouts and begin administering measures designed to hold them in school. The basic step would be a critical evaluation of the curriculum. Provision for technical and vocational courses helps meet the requirements of students for whom academic work fills no real need; complement basic academic training with a wide selection of electives; give remedial work in academic studies; provide extra-curricular activities for all; find ways to meet financial hardship through cooperative work programs.

Dropouts should not be charged as exclusively the fault of the secondary school. The problems which lead to leaving school begin early, and are often clearly apparent in the elementary grades.² If the elementary school program is made to meet the needs of all pupils, it will give much

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., 184.

needed encouragement to those who might tend to drop out of school later. A study made by Dr. Seymour Wolfbein showed that 31 per cent of the students dropped out of school before the eighth grade and 30 per cent by the ninth grade.¹ The implication of this study was that children needed counseling and guidance during the first six grades of elementary school.

Dropouts constitute a universal problem. Each school must study its own problem, learn what dropouts are like, forces which influenced them to leave school, identify the potential dropouts, and evaluate possible remedies. Remedies should not reduce learning opportunities. Any success in dealing with the dropout problem depends on the attitude of the administration, the faculty, and the school patronage.

Remedies to dropout problem. Some remedies or approaches to the problem are:²

1. Mass counseling. This involves a person-to-person interviewing of the dropouts and potential dropouts. This student must be persuaded to return to

¹Ibid.

²Robert R. Norman, "Automation, Dropout, and Guidance," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, XXXXVIII (November, 1964), 88-89.

school.

2. Work study programs. This would allow students to work half-time for regular wages and to study half-time for credit toward a diploma.
 3. Cooperative education program. This involves two students holding down one job and each student studies the other half. The jobs would be tied closely to the students' interests and future job opportunities.
 4. Higher horizons programs. This would be aimed at underprivileged children living in slum districts. Counselors would work intensively with both children and parents to spur interest in education and "equalize" cultural gaps between children.
 5. Custom made curricula. This entails waiving ordinary academic requirements and allowing students to pursue any course they may desire instead of a pre-package plan.
 6. Exploratory terms or semesters. This would allow an eighth or ninth grade student to look around for a month or so to find out what courses appeal to him. Then with the help of a counselor, a schedule would be drawn up to fit his particular needs.
 7. Rusticating plans. This would allow dropouts to look for a job and then return to school without
-

any black marks.

8. Vocational boarding school program. This would establish coeducational schools for the dropouts or academic misfits. The programs would run for two to three years and offer a wide range of academic and vocational courses. These schools would work closely with local industry and employment agencies. Through intensive testing the potential of each person would be determined.

New approaches to the dropout problem. About the country many new approaches have been brought to bear on the dropout problem. The programs can be divided into six main areas: (1) school related adult education programs for employed and unemployed; (2) job upgrading programs; (3) work-study programs; (4) operation return; (5) Higher Horizons and compensatory education; and (6) kindergarten and early childhood programs.¹

Frankly many of these programs--as good as they are--are not the answer. They are almost a corrective rather than a preventive method. They are important, but they should be something like a last resort.

Programs which deal with the dropout problem on a

¹Schreiber, Guidance and the School Dropout, op. cit., p. 6.

more fundamental basis such as Higher Horizons, begin with third grade students and extend to cover the junior high school are more preventive by nature.¹ These programs focus on the socio-economic conditions that are reflected in the profile of the dropout and bring to bear both classroom activities and a cultural enrichment program. Programs such as this have averaged an individual gain of 13 IQ points in three years.² The Higher Horizons program could even begin with preschool and kindergarten children who are disadvantaged. This program aims at building a background of experience and understanding which can lend more meaning to the child's early education. Programs of this type are more preventive and would provide the disadvantaged child experiences and understanding that the advantage child normally gets.

Interwound with these programs is the belief that a lack of guidance and counseling have contributed to the severity of the dropout problem.³ More and better guidance and counseling would greatly improve a youth's chance to achieve meaningful success in school and in adult life.

Programs which are effective in combating the dropout problem are programs which get the parents involved.

Schreiber states that over the long haul programs in

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

the nursery and kindergarten areas will probably be most beneficial in preventing dropouts.¹ Dropping out of school doesn't happen overnight. There is growing evidence that in a large majority of cases it starts in the preschool years. The disadvantaged children of disadvantaged parents come to school with nothing like the tools, experience, or security of middle class children. From the start they experience failure, and many never recover from it.

Special programs and projects aimed at combating the dropout problem are needed for culturally disadvantaged preschoolers.

All educators must do their full share in combating the dropout problems. According to Hoyt, educators should cease concentrating on trying to identify potential dropouts and spend more time on trying to provide sound experiences for all students.² Educators have demonstrated their ability to identify some potential dropouts while they have yet to demonstrate that they can effectively increase holding power of the school.

A second change would be for professional educators to recognize the equal worth of the various educational

¹Daniel Schreiber, "Helping the Potential Dropout," The PTA Magazine, LVIII (November, 1963), 5.

²Kenneth B. Hoyt, "Guidance and School Dropouts," Education, LXXXV (December, 1964), 230.

programs that are offered to high school youth. Educators must realize that the best pattern of courses a student could possibly take would not be college preparatory. They must recognize the fallacy of such an assumption and the dangerous implication it holds for many prospective drop-outs. There are no "second class" curricula and no "second class" students. The "best" pattern of courses for a given individual is the most appropriate to meet his needs.¹

A third change related to the above suggestions by Hoyt is to abolish the term "noncollege bound" as a generic phrase to describe those students who choose to do something other than attend college on leaving high school.² This vague undifferentiated term, if not implying failure, at least implies a prediction of less than maximal success for those so classified.

Hoyt also states we should no longer ask of a student, "Do you plan to go to college or go to work when you leave high school?" That day is past. According to Hoyt, the question for the majority should be, "Do you plan to go to college or continue your education in some other kind of schooling when you leave high school?"³

A vast majority of our high school youth need something to look forward to beyond high school, not just those

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

headed for college. Recognition and acceptance of this concept might be a very positive way of combating the dropout problem.

The Rodman experience with dropouts. The Rodman Job Corps Center at New Bedford, Massachusetts, learned the following lessons from experience with high school dropouts.¹

If dropouts are to become students, they must experience early constant success. Those dropouts who succeeded in their classroom generally became aggressive students within two and a half months.

Early instruction of dropouts must be largely verbal, with a gradual shift to written materials as each student's reading ability improves.

Group instruction is more successful than individualized instruction or teaching machines with dropout students who don't have independent study habits or the training needed to reason critically or ask pertinent questions.

Dropouts with average seventh grade skills can absorb the vocational training and acquire the academic skills necessary to prepare them for a job in a much shorter time

¹Lloyd Besant, "Lessons from the Rodman Experience with Dropouts," Today's Education, XXXXVIII. (February, 1969), 52.

than the traditional high school setting usually requires.

Instead of the sixteen week curriculum with its ultimate pass-fail evaluation, these students need one composed of much shorter units, some only a week long, so that the teacher can constantly evaluate and reward their progress. A student ought not to be allowed to fail a course part way through and then sit there until the semester ends. Incipient failure should be quickly checked by recycling a student through units he has not mastered.

Counseling is imperative. It must be intensive, highly personal, concerned with all aspects of the student's life, and above all realistic.¹ Counseling must be a comprehensive process dealing with all aspects of life. Every staff member must be involved with the counseling process. Experience at the Rodman Job Corps Center indicates that many schools need more guidance personnel to handle this intensive type of counseling--and they must be used as counselors, not disciplinarians or record keepers.

The potential dropout needs compassionate teachers who really care about him. He will need individual attention. He needs to see himself as a citizen, as a person who has a part in what is going on, and sees it as relevant to his own life.

¹Ibid.

Chapter III is devoted to the investigation by questionnaire of the dropouts in Urbandale High School between the years 1963-1968. The data collected is tabulated and comparison can be made as to the effect curriculum innovations have on the dropout rate.

CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION OF DATA

The data presented in this chapter were obtained by means of a questionnaire designed to show the effects curriculum innovations have had on the dropout rate in Urbandale High School between the years 1963-1968. The questionnaire was sent to all students who had become dropouts of Urbandale High School between 1963-1968. A copy of the questionnaire¹ used in making this study may be found in the Appendix of this study.

<u>Number of Questionnaires</u> <u>Sent</u>	<u>Number of Questionnaires</u> <u>Returned</u>
38	28

A total of thirty-eight questionnaires were sent to dropouts of Urbandale High School between the years 1963-1968. Twenty-eight of the questionnaires were returned for a 74 per cent return.

Table I shows the grade level at which students dropped out and the holding power of the school. The dropout percentage was never over 10 per cent for any year in the study.

The table also shows that the number of students

¹See Appendix

graduating had doubled between the years 1964-1968, while the number of dropouts did not increase at the same rate.

TABLE I
A STUDY OF THE DROPOUTS OF URBANDALE HIGH SCHOOL
FOR YEARS 1964-1968

Grad. class by year	Dropouts by grade			Total dropouts	Total grad.	Holding power percentage
	10	11	12			
1964	3	1	2	6	75	92.6
1965	3	1	2	6	116	95.1
1966	1	3	2	6	104	94.5
1967	4	3	4	11	107	90.7
1968	3	4	2	9	151	94.4
Totals	14	12	12	38		

As the table indicates there is not a great deal of difference as to the grade level at which students drop out of high school.

The graduating class of 1967 had the lowest holding power percentage of any graduating class in the study. It should be pointed out that these students had dropped out of school before the innovative program went into effect in the fall of 1967.

The year 1963 was not included in this table since complete information was not available.

In Table II, 17 respondents indicated they had

received no further education since dropping out of school. This accounts for almost 61 per cent of the dropouts not continuing their education since becoming dropouts. Also the table indicates about 40 per cent of the dropouts realize the value of an education and return for additional instruction of some kind.

TABLE II

THE NUMBER OF DROPOUTS FROM URBANDALE HIGH SCHOOL
BETWEEN THE YEARS 1963-1968 WHO CONTINUED
THEIR EDUCATION

Response	Frequency	Per cent
Trade school	3	10.7
Vocational school	---	---
Night classes	1	3.6
Armed Forces schooling	2	7.1
Returned to Urbandale High School	3	10.7
Returned to other public schools	1	3.6
Correspondence school	1	3.6
No further education	17	60.7
Totals	28	100.0

Eleven of the 28 dropouts did continue their education after dropping out of school. This accounts for almost 40 per cent of the dropouts. Of the 11 continuing their education, 4 later received diplomas, 3 by re-enrolling in Urbandale High School, and 1 by attending school in the service. Also one received a high school equivalency

diploma, another is attending American Beauty Academy, and one attended American School, a correspondence school, and is now employed as a dental assistant.

Table III shows the type of employment of the dropouts of Urbandale High School between years 1963-1968.

TABLE III
TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT SECURED BY THE DROPOUTS FROM
URBANDALE HIGH SCHOOL BETWEEN
1963-1968

Response	Frequency	Per cent
Skilled	1	3.6
Semi-skilled	7	25.0
Unskilled	6	21.4
In service	2	7.1
Not employed	12	42.9
Totals	28	100.0

Twelve of the 28 dropouts or about 43 per cent are not employed. Two are in the service, while the other 14 are employed. The type of employment varies from unskilled to skilled. Most of the dropouts are employed at unskilled or semi-skilled work. It is interesting to note that one has secured skilled work, which was due to a continuation of her education after dropping out of school.

The dropouts responded to their basic reasons for dropping out of school in Table IV.

TABLE IV

REASONS FOR DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL AS INDICATED BY
DROPOUTS OF URBANDALE HIGH SCHOOL FOR
YEARS 1963-1968

Response	Frequency	Per cent
Lack of appropriate curriculum	3	10.7
Academic difficulty	5	17.8
Lack of acceptance socially	4	14.3
Marriage and pregnancy	13	46.4
Financial need	---	---
Reading retardation	1	3.6
Difficulties with staff and administration	1	3.6
Disruptive home situation	1	3.6
Totals	28	100.0

Four students dropped out because they were not socially accepted in school by their peers. Five indicated that school was too difficult for them. Three stated that the curriculum was not appropriate for their interests.

Marriage and pregnancy accounted for 13 of the 28 dropouts. Only 1 out of 28 listed reading retardation as the reason for dropping from school. This is contrary to the current literature which has concluded that reading retardation as the main reason for students dropping out of school.

One each indicated a disruptive home situation and difficulty with staff and administration as reasons for

leaving school. No one indicated financial need as a reason for dropping out of school.

Two of the dropouts conferred with the principal before dropping out. (See Table V.) Only one conferred with a teacher before dropping out, and not a single dropout conferred with the school nurse or psychologist before dropping out of school.

TABLE V
THE NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF DROPOUTS IN URBANDALE
HIGH SCHOOL WHO CONFERRED WITH SCHOOL
PERSONNEL BEFORE DROPPING OUT

Response	Frequency	Per cent
Teachers	1	3.6
Counselors	5	17.9
Principal	2	7.1
Nurse	--	----
Psychologist	--	----
No one	20	71.4
Totals	28	100.0

Table V also shows that 20 of the 28 dropouts did not confer with any school personnel before becoming dropouts. Only 5 of the 28 dropouts conferred with the counselors before becoming dropouts.

Twenty-one of 28 dropouts indicated that parent-pupil counseling would not keep students from dropping out

of school. (See Table VI.) This was the response from three-fourths of the dropouts. Only 7 of the 28 thought it might help keep them in school.

TABLE VI

THE NUMBER OF DROPOUTS OF URBANDALE HIGH SCHOOL
WHO THINK PARENT AND PUPIL COUNSELING WOULD
HELP KEEP STUDENTS FROM DROPPING OUT

Response	Frequency	Per cent
YES	7	25.0
NO	21	75.0
Totals	28	100.0

Table VII indicates that vocations as elective courses in the curriculum appealed to the greatest number of dropouts. Nineteen dropouts of the 28 who responded indicated they should be added to the curriculum. Also office education ranked high with 18 of the 28 respondents feeling it should be added to the curricula. A majority of the dropouts indicated that distributive education and business education should become a part of the curricula. According to the table the dropouts would like the high school curricula prepare them for a job upon graduation.

The foreign languages and mathematics courses were of

TABLE VII

ELECTIVE COURSES DROPOUTS FEEL SHOULD BE ADDED TO
THE CURRICULUM OF URBANDALE HIGH SCHOOL

Response	Frequency
SOCIAL STUDIES	
International relations	7
Consumer economics	4
Political parties	2
SCIENCE	
Human physiology	3
Individual projects	7
Zoology	2
MATHEMATICS	
Computer programming	6
VOCATIONS	
Cabinet making	1
Home management	11
Metal working	1
Basic electricity	2
Small motor mechanics	4
ARTS	
Sketch drawing	3
Ceramics, printmaking, and sculptures	7
BUSINESS EDUCATION	
Office practice	14
DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION	
Problems	4
Jobs	11
OFFICE EDUCATION	
Secretarial	9
Clerical	5
Jobs	4
FOREIGN LANGUAGE	
Spanish	2
French	5

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considerably less interest to the dropouts. They did not see a need for adding these courses to the curriculum.

Table VIII indicates what innovations would have helped to influence dropouts to stay in school.

TABLE VIII
INNOVATIONS IN URBANDALE HIGH SCHOOL THAT WOULD
HAVE HELPED INFLUENCE DROPOUTS
TO STAY IN SCHOOL

Response	Frequency
More elective curriculum	24
Ungraded curriculum	4
Semester based curriculum	8
Free time options	24
Individual independent study projects	16
Education by agreement	10
Option days	17
Flexible schedule	6
Stress on learning over grades	17
Person to person relations with students	14

The significance of Table VIII is that 24 of 28 respondents have indicated they would like a more elective curriculum as opposed to a limited required curriculum. Also, 24 of 28 respondents liked the free time options which does away with the required study halls. Other innovations which ranked high were option days, individual independent projects, stress on learning over grades, and a more person-to-person relation with the students by the

teachers and administrators.

Flexible scheduling, ungraded curriculum, and semester based curriculum have very little influence on keeping dropouts in school.

TABLE IX
FEELINGS OF DROPOUTS OF URBANDALE HIGH SCHOOL AS
TO WHETHER NEW INNOVATIONS TEND TO KEEP
POTENTIAL DROPOUTS IN SCHOOL

Response	Frequency	Per cent
YES	20	71.4
NO	8	28.6
Totals	28	100.0

Twenty respondents of 28 have indicated that the innovations are a big step forward in keeping potential dropouts in school. (See Table IX.) The other 8 thought that if a student wanted to drop out, these innovations would have no bearing on keeping him in school.

Table X shows that more girls than boys dropped out of school between years 1963-1968. There were almost twice as many girls as boys dropping out of Urbandale High School. Sixty-four per cent of the dropouts were girls, while only about 36 per cent were boys. The large percentage of girls dropping out of school was due to pregnancy and marriage

which is shown in Table IV, page 40.

TABLE X

THE DROPOUTS IN URBANDALE HIGH SCHOOL BETWEEN
THE YEARS 1963-1968 BY SEX

Response	Frequency	Per cent
BOYS	10	35.7
GIRLS	18	64.3
Totals	28	100.0

TABLE XI

THE EFFECT THE INNOVATIONS IN URBANDALE HIGH SCHOOL
HAD ON THE YEARLY DROPOUT RATE BETWEEN
THE YEARS 1963-1968

Year	Frequency	Per cent
1963	3	10.7
1964	3	10.7
1965	6	21.4
1966	8	28.7
1967	5	17.8
1968	3	10.7
Totals	28	100.0

Table XI above shows that 3 students dropped out in

each of the years 1963 and 1964. In 1965, the number increased to 6 or doubled the preceding two years. A total of 8 dropping out of school is shown in 1966 which accounts for about 29 per cent of the total dropouts between the years 1963-1968. In 1967, the number of students who dropped out fell to 5. The last year of the study shows only 3 students dropping out of Urbandale High School.

The number of dropouts has been reduced after showing an increase in the years 1965-1966.

In Chapter IV, conclusions are drawn and recommendations are presented. Following Chapter IV is the Appendix, which contains a copy of the questionnaire used in this study.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. SUMMARY

The purpose of this study is to determine whether the new curriculum innovations in operation at Urbandale High School have increased the holding power of its students, thus reducing the dropout rate.

All of those quantitative data contained in the research were obtained from a questionnaire composed at the start of this study. The questionnaire was validated and mailed to the thirty-eight students who were dropouts from Urbandale High School between the years 1963-1968.

II. CONCLUSIONS

The study shows that Urbandale does not have a serious dropout problem. The dropout percentage was never over 10 per cent for any year in the study. When this is compared to the national average of 35 per cent, we find Urbandale High School far below the national average. The state of California, which is considered a leader in education, is reported to have a dropout rate of between 20 and 30 per cent.

Urbandale is a suburban area and, as all the

studies of dropouts reflect, the holding power of secondary schools is less effective in the large cities and rural areas than in suburbs where the socio-economic level is higher.

The study also reveals that most of the dropouts of Urbandale High School leave school during the tenth grade. This is in agreement with other studies which have been carried on in other areas.

Another conclusion of the study is that a large number (40 per cent) of those who become dropouts of Urbandale High School later continue their education by various media. This is the reason half of the dropouts are now gainfully employed. This is a much higher percentage than the current literature indicates about the employment of dropouts.

The study reveals that almost half of the dropouts of Urbandale High School quit school for reasons attributed directly to the school. Several dropouts cited such things as school being too difficult, lack of appropriate curriculum, and lack of acceptance socially as reasons for dropping out of Urbandale High School.

Marriage and pregnancy accounted for a large number of dropouts in this study. It was unusually high (46 per cent) much higher than the national average.

A lack of counseling with the dropouts was very

evident in this study. Only eight of the twenty-eight dropouts conferred with school personnel before dropping out of school. Counselors and other school personnel should take a more active role in trying to keep the dropout students in school.

The dropouts in this study felt that parent and pupil counseling would be of no value in keeping students from dropping out of school. They indicated very strongly that this would not help reduce the dropout rate.

The dropouts stressed very strongly that they would like to have their education prepare them for a job or else give them actual job experience. The courses offered which are more for college preparation did not rank very high with the dropouts. They want an education which is relevant to their needs and purposes, and they do not see college preparation instruction as relevant. A more interesting curriculum that appeals to dropouts must be substituted for the regular courses which are unpalatable to them.

This study shows that the dropouts of Urbandale High School like many of the new innovations and feel they would influence dropouts to stay in school. The dropouts were particularly interested in those innovations which give them opportunity to have a choice or to make decisions on their own rather than to be told that they must take a

specified course, or must be in a particular room for so many minutes for study. They definitely indicated more elective curriculum, free time options, option days, and individual projects as innovations which would have influenced them to stay in school. They also thought that more stress on learning over grades and a more person-to-person relation with teachers and administrators would also influence dropouts to stay in school.

Seventy-one per cent of the dropouts of Urbandale High School felt that the new innovations would tend to keep potential dropouts in school. From the responses to this question it is evident Urbandale High School is moving in the right direction to reduce its number of dropouts.

More girls than boys dropped out of Urbandale High School between the years 1963-1968. This is the reverse of what the current literature indicates. It states that about 53 per cent of the dropouts are boys. This abnormally large girl dropout percentage is due to pregnancy and marriage.

It appears that the yearly dropout percentage in Urbandale High School is decreasing since the new curriculum innovations were adopted in 1967. In 1963, three students dropped out accounting for 11 per cent of the total number of dropouts between years 1963-1968. In 1965, it went up to six or 21 per cent of the total, and in 1966 it

reached a high of eight for almost 29 per cent. In 1967, the year the innovations were introduced, it showed a reduction to five dropouts or about 18 per cent of the total. In 1968, the last year of this study it was reduced even more, down to three dropouts, or back to about 11 per cent. The percentage of dropouts decreased despite a rapidly increasing enrollment in Urbandale High School between the years 1963-1968.

One of the limitations of this study is the length of time that the new innovations have been in effect. These innovations have been in effect for only a two year period of this study. A continuation of this study should be made to see if the current reduction in dropouts from Urbandale High School continues.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

The first recommendation is that increased guidance service take place between school personnel and the potential dropouts. Every dropout should receive guidance before he drops out and after he drops out of school. This may require a visit to the dropout's home. After the student has been out of school for a period of time, a visit by guidance personnel or other school personnel should be made with the dropout to show that the school has an interest in him and his well being. The dropout

at this time could be very receptive to returning to school to be with his friends after finding himself rather lonely and lost in the dropout world.

Also more guidance personnel should work with the students in the elementary schools to identify the potential dropouts and work with them. A preventive program should be inaugurated instead of waiting until the student is about to drop out and then trying to attack the problem. Students must be prevented from dropping out of school.

A second recommendation would be additional changes in the curriculum offerings. It should be a custom-made curricula which is tailored to the needs of the student. Students want to pursue more of the courses they desire and waive many of the required academic areas.

A third recommendation is expansion of the work-study program to include more occupational areas. At the present it is primarily in the field of clerical work, but it should include some on-the-job-training in the field of mechanics, retail sales, welding, appliance service, auto body repair, and carpentry which are future job opportunities. Also the number of job placements should be increased so as to place all students that are interested in the work-study program.

A fourth recommendation would be to add a program of family life study to the curriculum. This would be

administered during the tenth grade since most of the students drop out at this grade level. Advanced work in family life would also be given to eleventh and twelfth grade students. This program would reveal to the students the family's role in today's society, human sexuality, and problems of the family. As many of the students in this study dropped out of school for marriage, this program should be helpful in married life.

Since the innovations in Urbandale High School have been in effect for only two years, it is impossible to acknowledge any long-term trends. A follow-up study is needed to determine whether the dropout rate in Urbandale High School continues to decrease in the forthcoming years.

Also a study of students who remain in school but would like to drop out should be made. This might reveal some very important information.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

A STUDY OF THE DROPOUTS AND THE HOLDING POWER OF STUDENTS IN URBANDALE HIGH SCHOOL FOR YEARS 1963-68

- I. Indicate which of the following schools you attended since dropping out of Urbandale High School.

<input type="checkbox"/> Trade School	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult Classes
<input type="checkbox"/> Vocational School	<input type="checkbox"/> Armed Forces Schooling
<input type="checkbox"/> Night Classes	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Public School
<input type="checkbox"/> None	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____	

- II. If employed at the present, which of these types of employment best describes your job classification?

<input type="checkbox"/> Skilled	<input type="checkbox"/> Unskilled
<input type="checkbox"/> Semi-skilled	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Explain) _____	

- III. Indicate which of these school policies or courses of study were deficient in providing you with an education.

<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of appropriate curriculum (Too many required subjects and not enough vocational training)
<input type="checkbox"/> Academic difficulty (Setting too high of standards for success in school)
<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of acceptance socially in school
<input type="checkbox"/> Engagement and/or marriage
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial need (Not being able to meet financial expense of school)
<input type="checkbox"/> Not being able to read adequately for your grade level
<input type="checkbox"/> Disruptive home situation
<input type="checkbox"/> Problem in getting along with teachers and/or school administrators

- IV. Which of these school staff members did you confer with before dropping out?

<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/> Nurse
<input type="checkbox"/> Counselor	<input type="checkbox"/> Psychologist
<input type="checkbox"/> Principal	<input type="checkbox"/> No One
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____	

- V. Do you think that parent and pupil counseling before dropping out would have held you in school?

_____ YES

_____ NO

- VI. Which of these elective courses, which were not offered when you were attending Urbandale High School, might have kept you in school?

Social Studies

- _____ Political Parties
_____ International Relations
_____ Consumer Economics
_____ Motorcycle Driver Training

Science

- _____ Botany
_____ Zoology
_____ Human Physiology
_____ Individual Projects

Foreign Language

- _____ German
_____ Spanish

Vocations

- _____ Food Nutrition
_____ Home Management
_____ Small Motor Mechanics
_____ Blueprint Reading
_____ Radio Electronics
_____ Basic Electricity
_____ Metal Working
_____ Cabinet Making

Math

- _____ Fundamentals of Computers
_____ Computer Programming
_____ Probability Theory and Statistics

Arts

- _____ Sketch Drawing
_____ Paint and Print
_____ Ceramics, Printmaking, and Sculptures

Business Education

- _____ Office Practice
_____ Business Law
_____ General Business

*Distributive Education

____ Problems

____ Jobs

*Office Education

____ Clerical

____ Secretarial

____ Problems

____ Jobs

*Under the distributive education and office education curriculum on the job training is given. The student receives actual instruction in areas of salesmanship or office work and has actual experience in various stores and offices. Students are released from school to work in qualified stores and offices under supervision of their coordinator.

VII. Which of these changes would have influenced you to stay in school? Please check.

____ 1. MORE ELECTIVE CURRICULUM

Fewer required subjects and more elective subjects. Example: 10th, 11th, and 12th graders required to take only two semesters of English as compared to six.

____ 2. UNGRADED CURRICULUM

Seniors may take 10th or 11th grade courses and 10th graders may take senior courses if capable.

____ 3. SEMESTER BASED CURRICULUM

Setting up of courses on a semester basis rather than a yearly basis provides for greater flexibility, giving student a greater selection from which to choose. This results in the student choosing his courses on basis of interest, need, and readiness instead of requiring students to take courses which will not help them a great deal.

____ 4. FREE TIME OPTIONS

Study halls which restrict a student's academic options have been done away with. Instead, when a student does not have a class they may use their free time in many different ways. For example, students may

a. Study in the library.

- b. Study and work together with other students in the hall.
- c. Relax in commons room where atmosphere is informal.
- d. Make use of any available area of the school or teacher for work.
- e. With parents permission, they may leave the school premises.
- f. May be assigned by teachers or parents to a supervised study class.
- g. With teachers permission may audit (visit other classes which they, the student, feel a special need or interest).
- h. Seminars are offered where students meet with teachers, counselors, principal, lay people to discuss their needs, gripes, study procedures, and education philosophy and purpose.

— 5. INDIVIDUAL INDEPENDENT STUDY PROJECTS

With approval of teachers a student may work on an individual project. Students meet with teachers periodically and presents project along with oral examination.

— 6. EDUCATION BY AGREEMENT

Each student signs a contract with their teacher to perform specific responsibilities for the course. Instead of class meeting on a regular schedule the students meet in small groups less frequently and confer with teacher for a course.

— 7. OPTION DAYS

These are held one day each month to give the student a break from their regular routine educational experiences with no stress on grades. These options consist of listening to someone who is an authority in one of the academic areas. Then small group discussions follow this.

— 8. FLEXIBLE SCHEDULE

Some classes do not meet every day. Some classes meet for double periods on certain days. This permits new course approaches and teaching techniques to be put in practice.

— 9. STRESS ON LEARNING OVER GRADES

The philosophy of the faculty and administration is that grades should be a reflection of the desire to learn for self improvement. The stress on learning has been promoted by such things as elimination of honor rolls, option days, and independent study.

- ____ 10. PERSON TO PERSON RELATION WITH STUDENTS
The faculty and administration have adopted the policy of treating students on an individual basis. Rules which cover a large group are made only when necessary.

VIII. Do you feel that these changes tend to keep the potential dropout in school?

____ YES

____ NO